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31 July 1958

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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No Watch Committee conclusions--Sino-Soviet bloc (as of
30 July 58):

A. No Sino-Soviet bloc country intends to initiate hostilities against the continental US or its possessions in the immediate future.

B. No Sino-Soviet bloc country intends deliberately to initiate direct military action against US forces abroad, US allies, or areas peripheral to the Orbit in the immediate future.

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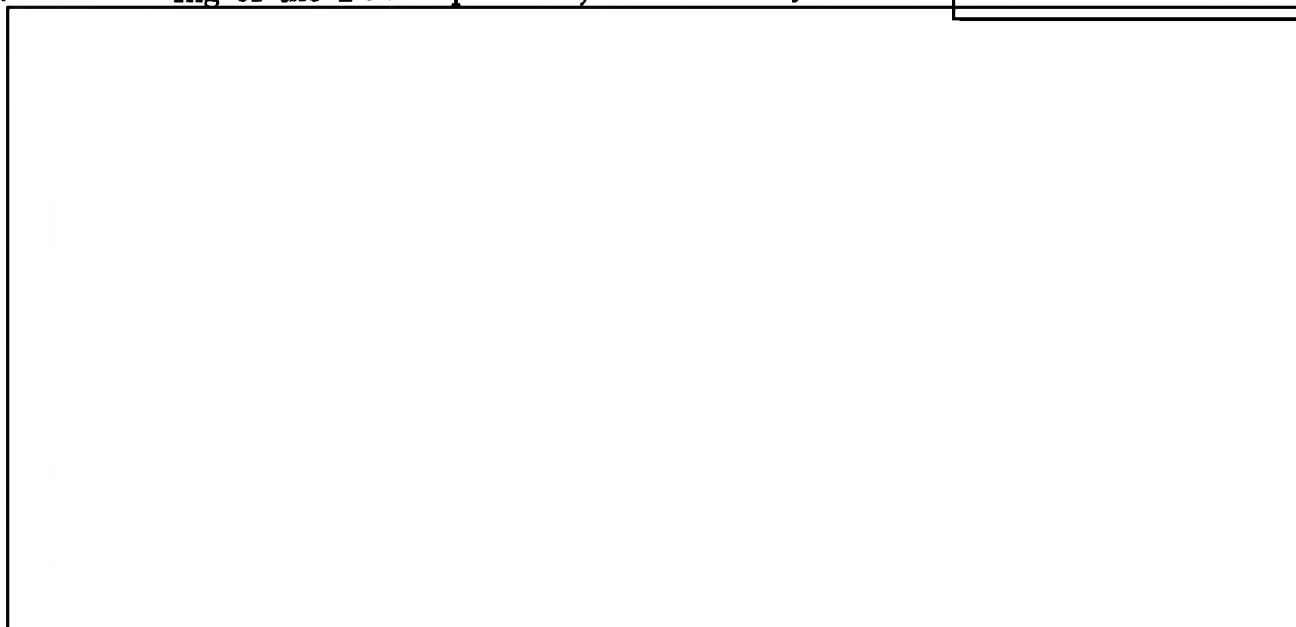
NOTE: While the USSR has placed some of its forces in positions of readiness, the Soviet Union has not taken many of the measures which would be considered necessary to prepare for aggressive action in the Middle East or elsewhere.

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Poland: The raid by Polish security police on the country's most important religious shrine will seriously jeopardize Gomulka's national popularity, particularly in the rural areas. Much of Gomulka's political strength has derived from his arriving at a truce with the church and obtaining the public backing of the Polish primate, Cardinal Wysinski.

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31 July 58

DAILY BRIEF

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No
Watch Committee conclusion--Middle East (as of 30 July 58): Although a deliberate initiation of open hostilities in the Middle East is unlikely in the immediate future, the situation remains highly unstable, particularly in Jordan and Lebanon where incidents might involve British and US forces. [redacted]

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III. THE WEST

No
Austria: Chancellor Raab's linking of Soviet and Austrian interests in statements during and since his 21-28 July visit to Moscow is causing concern in Austrian political circles, including members of the chancellor's own party. Socialist resentment will increase tensions in the Austrian governing coalition, but the stability of the government is not threatened. [redacted]

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No
Bolivia: Moderate President Siles apparently plans to resign on 6 August in favor of Senate President Alvarez Plata, who has recently been cooperating with leftist labor leader Juan Lechin. Although Siles has threatened to resign on previous occasions, American Ambassador Bonsal feels that this time a real crisis may be facing the government. [redacted]

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DAILY BRIEF

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Polish Church-State Truce Threatened

In an anticlerical move unprecedented in Gomulka's Poland for its violence and resemblance to Stalinism, the Polish regime on 21 July conducted a raid on the Jasna Gora monastery near Czestochowa, a national and religious shrine. On 29 July the government publicly charged the Catholic Church with distributing illegal and subversive publications printed on secret presses in Jasna Gora. The regime announcement followed the reading in Warsaw churches two days earlier of Cardinal Wyszynski's pastoral letter denouncing the search of the Jasna Gora premises.

The state maintained that the church had ignored a warning issued on 13 May, and was deliberately withholding illegally printed material from the censors. The regime further stated that "some 15" policemen had been ordered to the scene of the raid. One member of the angry crowd that assembled has been held in prison, and with others will be prosecuted for obstructing and resisting the security organs. In addition, all persons guilty of disseminating "false news harmful to the state" about the raid will be prosecuted. Legal action could therefore be taken against the cardinal himself.

Although there has been a gradual deterioration in church-state relations in the past few months, there has been no evidence of political action by the church requiring such stern retaliation by the regime. At the very least this move against the church seriously jeopardizes the church-state truce. Gomulka's popularity, especially among the peasants, has been damaged, and further moves of this sort would seriously weaken his popular position.

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III. THE WEST

Chancellor Raab's Performance in Moscow Worries Austrian Coalition Leaders

Political circles in Vienna, including two cabinet ministers who belong to the chancellor's own party, are evidently concerned over statements made by Chancellor Raab during and since his 21-28 July trip to Moscow. The archbishop of Vienna has privately expressed "anxiety and shock" over Raab's linking of Austrian and Soviet interests. The leading Socialist newspaper has denounced attempts to portray the concessions given Austria as a "Raab triumph"; this portends a further worsening of relations between the parties in the Austrian coalition government.

Since his return, Raab has said that the talks involve no changes in the "character" of Austria's neutrality, and, contrary to the final communiqué, denies having discussed broad international issues. He has, however, again praised the generosity of the Soviet Union, endorsed direct US-Soviet negotiations, and declared that there "never was any impediment to good relations with Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Yugoslavia." He has also urged other countries to follow Vienna's lead in joining the bloc-dominated Eastern Danube Convention, and Bonn, in response to a suggestion made by the Austrian delegation to the German Embassy in Moscow, now has this possibility under consideration.

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Bolivian President Apparently Plans to Resign

Moderate President Siles apparently plans to resign on 6 August in favor of Senate President Alvarez Plata--once considered a moderate but recently an ally of leftist labor leader Juan Lechin. Former President Paz reportedly intends to visit Peru from 5 to 7 August in an attempt to avoid association with the leftist takeover which an Alvarez presidency would imply.

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During the past 18 months Siles has repeatedly used threats of resignation to secure backing for his policies. He has nevertheless been faced with a widening division between the right and left wings of the governing Nationalist Revolutionary Movement. This division makes the present situation particularly serious in the eyes of American Ambassador Bonsal. The split extends beyond politics and could result in violence since most civilian militia are likely to be with the left wing and most army and police with the moderate wing.

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